

May 2d, 1854.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

A letter was read from the Portland (Maine) Society of Nat. History, dated April 20th, 1854, acknowledging the receipt of an entire copy of the Publications of the Academy, presented in accordance with a late resolution.

Also a letter from the American Philosophical Society, dated April 27, 1854, acknowledging the receipt of the last number of the Journal and of the Proceedings.

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May 9th.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Dr Le Conte presented a paper for publication in the Proceedings, entitled "Synopsis of the Cucuicides of the United States," which was referred to Mr. Cassin, Dr. Zantzingen, and Dr. Rand.

Dr. Le Conte exhibited a fragment of the jaw of a new Pachyderm from the Tertiary of Virginia, 80 or 90 miles S. W. of Alexandria, and characterised it as a new genus allied to Dicotyles.

Mr. Wm. Parker Foulke asked the attention of the Academy to a Lecture by Mr. Hugh Miller, recently republished in the United States, under the title, "The Two Records, the Mosaic and the Geological;" and made some remarks upon the importance of maintaining a careful scrutiny of the logic of the natural sciences. The cultivators of those sciences are particularly interested at this time in preventing any misapprehension of the results of their researches, as there is a prevailing disposition to "reconcile" these by extreme processes with the popular interpretation of certain texts of the Mosaic history. Unfinished investigations of the students of nature are used as complete evidence; and provisional generalizations are employed as fixed premises, from which are drawn conclusions very inconvenient to subsequent inquirers and writers. Thus both religion and natural science are wronged.

Mr. Miller teaches that in the attempt to reconcile the two "records," there are only three periods to be accounted for by the geologist, viz., "the period of plants, the period of *great sea monsters and creeping things*; and the period of *cattle and beasts of the field*;" that the first of these "periods" is represented by the rocks grouped under the term *palæozoic*, and is distinguished from the *secondary* and the *tertiary*, chiefly by its "gorgeous flora;" and that "the geological evidence is so complete as to be patent to all, that the first great period of organized being was, as described in the Mosaic record, peculiarly a period of herbs and trees yielding seed after their kind." The general reader, not familiar with the details of geological arrangement, could not fail to infer from such a statement, used for such a purpose, that the palæozoic rocks are regarded by geologists as forming one group, representative of one period which can properly be said to be distinguished as a whole by its gorgeous flora; and that it is properly so distinguished for the argument in question. It was familiar to the Academy as well as to Mr. Miller, that from the carboniferous rocks downward (backward in order of time) there have been discriminated a large number of periods differing one from another in mineral and in organic remains; and that the proportion of the carboniferous era to the whole series is small, whether we regard the thickness of its deposits or its conjectural chronology. It is only of this carboniferous era, the latest of this series, that the author's remarks could be true; and even of this, if taken for the entire surface of the earth, it could not be truly asserted that